

The Bad Place Study Guide

The Bad Place by Dean Koontz

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Plot Summary

The Bad Place, by Dean Koontz is the tale of Frank Pollard, a seemingly normal man with an extremely abnormal problem. Frank is unsure of who he is or what he does while he is asleep. Desperate for help Pollard turns to Bobby and Julie Dakota to help solve the mysteries in his life.

Frank Pollard wakes up in an alley, unsure of who he is, only that he is running from someone or something. Pollard makes his escape, barely, as a strange blue light destroys the area around him. Desperate to find the source of his amnesia and the strange things he finds when he wakes, Frank contacts Julie and Bobby Dakota, a married team of private investigators. The Dakotas take Frank's case, hoping that the mystery will bring them closer to realizing their dream of selling the agency and retiring young, able to enjoy their life together with Julie's brother Thomas.

The Dakotas investigate the fake identification that Frank carries with him, hoping to find some sort of history for the man. Meanwhile Frank is admitted to a hospital for tests to find out what he does while presumably sleep-walking. All members of the investigation team and Frank himself are in for a shock when it is discovered that Frank is not sleep-walking but teleporting. The fake IDs lead the Dakotas to brutally murdered families that may be connected to Frank in some way.

Bobby and Julie discover that Frank Pollard is in grave danger, and discover that this danger is in the form of Frank's brother, Candy. Candy has the ability to teleport as well, and he can track Frank by touching things that Frank has touched. In this way Candy follows Frank through time and space, trying to catch his brother and make him pay for the murder of their mother. Frank has been teleporting for years, hoping to stay clear of his brother. Due to the speed and frequency of his escapes, Frank has lost something of himself. Frank only remembers who he is and why he is running when hypnotized. During the session of hypnosis Frank becomes terrified and teleports, taking Bobby with him to all of the places he has tried to hide from his brother, the two most notable are another planet where engineered insects mine for red diamonds, and the study of Doc Fogarty who holds the key to the mysteries of the Pollard family. The horrors that Doc reveals in his matter of fact way, feeling no remorse for his part in the tale, horrify the Dakotas. It is at Doc Fogarty's house that Candy finally finds Frank and takes Julie Dakota, telling Frank he has fifteen minutes to return to their home and save her or he will kill her, as he has already killed so many tied to the Dokatas including Julie's brother Thomas.

Bobby and Frank rush to the Pollard home, with Bobby planning an end to Candy Pollard's years of destruction. The twins are present and it is their presence that gives Frank the opportunity needed. Frank senses his mother's presence and with horror Candy realizes that his beloved mother has been consumed by the pack of cats that always surround his sisters. Candy's fury at his sisters provides the time for Frank to grab his brother and they teleport rapidly, returning several times to reveal the horrific combination of the two men. At last they return a final time, fused into one being, a



mass of tissue and bone that cannot sustain itself. Candy is gone, and Frank has sacrificed himself, giving meaning to his life.

Bobby and Julie Dakota retire to a small house, one they have dreamed of, but without Thomas, who has been killed by Candy Pollard in his search for Frank. The Dakotas live on the cash and red diamonds that Frank had collected through his teleportation. Though they miss Thomas, Julie and Bobby refuse to live in sadness as this would be disrespectful to Julie's kind-hearted brother. Their dreams have come true, but their lives will forever be tempered with sadness at the loss of their friends and loved ones.



Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 Summary

In chapter one, Frank Pollard wakes in an alley. The only thing Frank knows for sure is that he is in danger and needs to move on. Frank leaves the alleyway, looking for escape from an unknown pursuer. The wind blows and strange flute-like music sounds from a distance. Frank finds an unlocked car to aide in his escape. As he opens the door a blue light pulses toward him, shattering the window. The blue light flashes, destroying the car around Frank. Frank finally loses control of the vehicle, crashing into a tree.

In chapter two, Bobby Dakota sits in a van, conducting surveillance on Tom Rasmussen, an employee of Decodyne, a computer company. Bobby speaks to Julie on the radio and watches Rasmussen through video security. The husband and wife wonder what Rasmussen is up to when the thief walks to the video camera and holds up a sign that says "GOODBYE, ASSHOLE." Bobby tells Julie there might be trouble, and yells for her to run when gunfire erupts, tearing through the van.

In chapter three Frank Pollard runs, finding an abandoned apartment complex. He climbs to an upstairs apartment, and looks out the window. A stranger enters the complex's courtyard and stands quietly, then slowly walks toward the same stairs that Frank had ascended. Frank watches the man approach, hoping he will not be found.

In chapter four Bobby crouches on the floor of the van as bullets pierce its sides. The gunfire finally stops, and Bobby can smelt burnt metal and gasoline. Wondering if he should risk getting out of the van or being burned alive if it explodes, he hears a car horn and the gunfire begins again. Bobby realizes that what he hears is Julie, coming to his aide.

In chapter five Frank waits in the apartment. Finding a broken window Frank weighs his chance of escape. His decision is made when a blue light pulses through the apartment. Frank leaps to the ground below as a truck turns the corner near him. Frank rushes to the truck and clings to the tailgate as it drives away, clutching the bag, hoping its contents will help him discover who he is and what he is running from.

Chapters 1-5 Analysis

The reader is introduced to three main characters in the novel *The Bad Place*, by Dean Koontz. The first, Frank Pollard, wakes in a alley, unsure why he is there, or even who he is. The only other living thing in the alley is a cat, which seems insignificant, but will prove to be important later in the novel. The only thing that Pollard has with him is a flight bag, but he has not time to look in it, concerned for his safety, though not sure why.



The confusion that Frank suffers from seems innocent enough, though a reason for it will be provided as more is learned about who he is. More will be revealed about his pursuer and what the man wants as well.

Bobby and Julie Dakota are a married couple, and the owners of Dakota and Dakota. The two love each other very much, and have a great relationship. They both love swing music, and listen to it while they conduct surveillance on Tom Rasmussen within the walls of Decodyne. It is clear to the reader that the two are a team both at work and away from it from the comfortable banter that takes place while they work. It is also clear how deep their love is when Bobby orders Julie to leave when danger is at hand, and for her refusal to do so, charging forward with no thought for her own safety.

The blue light that destroys the car that Frank steals is obviously mysterious, leading one to believe that there is something taking place in the novel that is not of this world. The blue light and the flute-like music that Frank hears while being pursued will recur throughout the novel, and be explained in detail as the plot progresses.



Chapters 6-10

Chapters 6-10 Summary

In chapter six, Julie Dakota drives around the Decodyne building. Two gunmen are firing into the van as she reaches the street. Julie uses the car as a weapon, hitting one of the men. Julie fires at the van the second man has leapt into. Leaping from her car, Julie runs to Bobby's van. Bobby climbs out of the van, unharmed. The police arrive and the couple agree that they should have the officers assist in the search for Rasmussen in case he is armed.

In chapter seven, Frank Pollard rides in the truck for a few blocks, then finds a car with the keys under the front mat. Driving for a while, Frank finally pulls over, for the first time feeling safe enough to stop and see if he has any identification. Frank's pockets are empty, so he unzips the bag and discovers that it is filled with stacks of money.

In chapter eight Julie and Bobby wait for the police to find Rasmussen, worried that he might have gotten away with the program. The police come out, informing the couple that they have found Rasmussen and asking if they would like to speak with him and verify that the discs he has are the program he was trying to steal. They say they do.

In chapter nine Frank counts the money, figuring there is over \$100,000 in the bag. The bag also yields two passports and driver's licenses, one with the name George Farris, the other in the name of James Roman. Frank checks his reflection, and it is his face on the documents. Frank worries, having no idea what he is involved in, or who he really is.

In chapter ten, Bobby and Julie meet with Tom Rasmussen. Julie introduces herself and tells him that she is Bobby's wife, and that she would like to blind him for having tried to harm her husband. Julie knows Rasmussen fears blindness from the background check they ran on him. Bobby returns, aware that Julie must have cracked Rasmussen. Bobby tells Julie the Whizard file was on the discs.

Chapters 6-10 Analysis

The love Julie Dakota has for her husband is evident when she charges to his rescue rather than run as he has ordered her to. Julie is in fact angry at her husband for even suggesting she do so. Julie's inner strength is evident when she drives headlong into a volley of bullets to aide Bobby. There is no choice other than to use the car as a weapon, but Julie does not hesitate, rocketing directly at the men who are shooting at her husband. Julie also does not hesitate when it looks as if the second perpetrator will get away. Dakota tries to disable the vehicle, but when the man still insists on fleeing, Julie fires into the vehicle, unwilling to risk the chance that the assailant might get away.

Once she has determined that Bobby is safe and unharmed, Julie's anger at him is also evident. Julie is angry because Bobby told her to leave, and she tells him she is just as



capable of protecting him as he is of protecting her. Julie's anger is really over the fact that she came close to losing her husband, and the thought of that is horrific to her.

Julie again displays her anger when meeting with Rasmussen. Though she is intent on learning who hired the thief, she is also intent on making the man suffer for what almost happened to Bobby. Julie cannot assault Rasmussen physically, but she can use his psychology against him, his fear of blindness to create the same type of horror in him that she felt at the idea of losing Bobby.

Frank Pollard seems to have escaped his unknown pursuer, but does not rest until he is far from the apartment complex where he has last seen the blue light and heard the flute-like music. Pollard seems truly stunned to discover that the bag he has been carrying is filled with money, as well as two sets of photo identification. Frank needs to check and see if the faces in the pictures match his, because he no longer knows what he looks like. Though the faces match, Frank does not have any memory of either name, and he thinks he is really Frank Pollard. The problem is that he cannot even be sure of that.



Chapter 11-15

Chapter 11-15 Summary

In chapter 11, Frank no longer feels like he is being chased, and allows himself the time to try and figure out what is going on. Frank decides to sleep in the car, and his last thought is of fireflies in a windstorm.

In chapter 12, Bobby and Julie head home to Orange after a long night of interviews and reports. They live in a nice house, but it is relatively empty as they do not intend to have it for the long term. Both live for The Dream. The Dakotas live as inexpensively as possible, working in their business, hoping to cash out early and retire while still young.

The energy from the night burns off and the couple hold each other. Bobby reassures Julie that they are both alright, and then checks in at the office. He fixes a drink for Julie, knowing that she will be sick now that the adrenaline rush is over. Bobby reassures his wife that she is not a bad person when she tells him that she had acted for The Dream. Bobby tells Julie that there are things they would not do for The Dream, and that her heart should be pure.

In chapter 13, James or "Candy," plans to kill, knowing that it will upset his deceased mother. Candy enters the bedroom of a sleeping teenager, waking her by throwing back the covers. Before the girl can scream Candy muffles her, telling her that he wants her and then will leave. The girl calms, though Candy has no intention of raping her, finding sex disgusting. Candy bites her throat and drinks her blood. Candy proceeds to the room of a male, killing him and drinking his blood as well. In the final room Candy finds a sleeping woman, Candy climbs in bed beside the woman, missing his mother more than ever. Candy knocks her unconscious, and bites her palm, drinking from her as he used to drink from his mother.

In chapter 14 Frank Pollard wakes in the back seat of the stolen car. Stretching his fingers Frank discovers his hands filled with black sand. Once again Frank wonders who he is and what is happening to him.

In chapter 15 Bobby wakes up as does Julie. The two make love, truly in love. Afterward, Bobby suddenly feels that Julie is no longer there. The feeling is so strong he turns the light on to make sure that she is still there. Julie smiles but knows that something is bothering Bobby. Dakota shrugs it off as a headache. The two dress and eat a light breakfast, then drive to Cielo Vista Care Home, where Julie's brother Thomas lives. Thomas has Down's syndrome and part of Julie and Bobby's dream is to be able to have Thomas come live with them.

Thomas is thrilled to see them. Thomas shows Julie and Bobby the poem he has been working on. Unable to write, Thomas creates poems with pictures, cutting them out of magazines and stringing them together in a sequence to represent a feeling. The three



sit quietly for a while and Thomas tells Julie that it is bad outside. Julie assumes that Thomas is referring to the weather, but her brother tells her that he can feel badness, on his skin. It is clear that Thomas is trying to communicate his feelings but is having trouble. Julie reassures him and tells him that she will stay with him.

Chapter 11-15 Analysis

The reader gets a deeper look into the life of Bobby and Julie Dakota, and why they do what they do. Bobby Dakota had started his private investigation firm, and Julie had become a partner when they married. The couple works hard, building their agency and its reputation, waiting for the day when they can sell the business and have enough money to retire, leaving the world and its miseries to someone else to deal with. Bobby and Julie live for "The Dream." A small house on a beach, somewhere where they can live quietly with Julie's brother, Thomas.

Though Julie seemed fearless at the scene that evening, it is clear that she is acting purely by instinct, worried for Bobby, and is now on the downside of an adrenaline rush. Bobby knows that his wife will worry that she has become one of the bad people that she despises, and is ready to reassure her that this is not the case. This shows the reader how deeply the Dakotas are connected to each other and how deep their love is.

Bobby's feeling that Julie is not with him after they make love seems irrelevant, but will recur throughout the novel. As the plot progresses, Bobby will continue to have uneasy feelings in regards to his wife. As Bobby is usually very easy-going, this is not like him. Julie notices the change in him immediately, however he is unwilling to share his feelings with her, thinking himself silly, and not wanting to worry her.

The reader is introduced to James or "Candy." Candy is an obviously evil person, intent on killing because he feels a deep need to. Candy, a nickname given to him by his mother, thinks of his mother and how much he misses her, and how she will be disappointed in his actions. The reader learns that Candy's mother has been dead for seven years, but that he is still worries that she will be unhappy with him. It is clear that the relationship was an odd one as Candy thinks back to disappointing his mother and her form of punishment for him; shunning him and telling his siblings that he was dead.

Candy also remembers that his mother had taught him that killing was acceptable if the victim was a bad person, one that she had approved of him killing. Candy is usually able to control himself, but on this night he feels the need to kill, and to drink blood. Candy is not a vampire; the reader learns when he kills Roseanne Lofton that he often drank his mother's blood.

The reader is also introduced to Thomas, Julie Dakota's brother. Thomas lives in a home, as he has Down's syndrome and is unable to care for himself. Julie and Bobby include Thomas in "The Dream," longing to have Thomas come live with them. They are unable to live together now as their work schedule keeps them out most of the time.



Thomas is sensitive, though the reader will learn how sensitive later in the novel. The poetry he creates with pictures reveals emotions that are deeper than he can express with words. It is clear that Thomas loves Julie, and he appears worried, telling her that he can feel the "badness" outside the walls of Cielo Vista.

Frank Pollard is still worried, unable to remember who he is or what is happening to him. Waking in the stolen car Frank is confused as to why his hands are filled with black sand. The beaches in California have white sand, and Frank can think of no reason why he would have the sand at all, or where he would have gotten it.



Chapters 16-20

Chapters 16-20 Summary

In chapter 16, Frank cleans himself up, and drives to a motel. Eventually Frank falls asleep and is startled when he wakes up with blood on his hands and clothing, and scratches on his face. The busy motel would have made it impossible for him to enter the room in the state he is in without notice.

In chapter 17, Bobby and Julie walk on the beach and discussing The Dream. Julie knows that Thomas is bothered by a lot of people, but thinks a house on the beach would make him happy. Bobby still has feelings of unease, but brushes them off, telling his wife that they will be able to have their dreams and share them with Thomas.

In chapter 18 Candy wakes after sleeping all day. Upon waking Candy takes a shower and dresses. Leaving the bedroom he is greeted by a large group of cats which belong to his sisters, Violet and Verbina. Candy finds his sisters in the kitchen, curled up with the cats surrounding them. The girls are twins, four years younger than Candy, and say nothing as he enters. Violet only speaks when necessary, and as far as Candy knows, Verbina never speaks at all.

Candy eats until Violet tells him that Frankie had been outside. Violet tells Candy that Frankie had only stayed a moment and that he seemed afraid. Violet also tells Candy that the cats had gone after Frankie and he had killed one. Candy is appalled when Violet tells him to hurt Frankie for what he did to the cat, even if he is their brother. Candy tells Violet that if he ever finds Frankie he will hurt him for what he did to their mother. Candy heads outside, hoping he can get a sense of Frankie from where he had stood outside the house.

In chapter 19 Bobby and Julie go out to dinner and then dancing. Julie likes to dance after they visit Thomas to bring her spirits up. Bobby can no longer contain his sense of unease and asks Julie if she would work in the office more often for a while. Bobby tells Julie that he fears he will lose her and Julie reassures him.

In chapter 20 Candy goes outside. He is unable to do so, so Candy returns and asks Violet where Samantha is now. Violet gestures toward the pack of cats surrounding her and her sister, telling Candy that Samantha is with them, and again part of the pack. Candy knows that the other cats have eaten Samantha and that his sisters have partaken as well. Candy hates his brother and can feel an overwhelming rage building inside him. Dropping to his knees Candy prays to his mother, Roselle, for strength and then heads into the night to hunt.



Chapters 16-20 Analysis

Bobby and Julie spend time together after visiting Thomas, first at the beach discussing the home they will build someday. The two plan to include Thomas, and to live as a family. Julie sees the goal as attainable and Bobby does as well, though his sense of unease is still present.

Bobby finally tells Julie about his concern over losing her, and Julie is quick to reassure him. The two share a sense that life does not go on forever, and that it should be enjoyed while one can. Since Bobby feels so uneasy about his feelings earlier in the day, he is unable to join Julie and her sense that things are going well and they will see all of their dreams come true.

Frank wakes to find himself covered in blood and is obviously upset by this. Pollard has no memory of anything other than sitting in his motel room. There is no sign of a struggle anywhere and no sign of blood anywhere on the door or his car. Frank's sense of horror at his situation is becoming overwhelming to him.

The reader learns more about Candy, as well as his strange sisters, Violet and Verbina. Candy sleeps in his mother's bedroom and keeps it exactly as it was when she was alive. Candy is disgusted by anything sexual, even refusing to touch himself when he showers. The fact that his sisters dress in as little as possible bothers him, but he rarely says anything because he promised his mother that he would take care of them. To Candy this means tolerating their strange behavior.

Violet and Verbina are a strange pair, spending their days in almost complete silence, sharing space with over two dozen cats. The young women seem to communicate silently with each other and the cats that they cherish. In fact when Candy leaves his room he is greeted by the pack of cats and does not think it odd that his sisters do not speak when he enters the kitchen because the cats have greeted him already. The reader will get a better sense of exactly what this means as the novel progresses.

Violet tells Candy that "Frankie" had been there for a few minutes, and that he had killed one of their cats. The reader can assume that Violet is referring to Frank Pollard, the character who is struggling with his identity and strange situation. Violet says that Frank often comes by and seems to be looking for something. Candy is incensed that his brother would dare return to their home. Violet comments that she wants him hurt the way that he hurt her cat and Candy becomes even more angry, reminding his sister of what Frank did to their mother.

The reader learns that Candy has the ability to touch things and sense who has touched them and where they are now. It is also mentioned that when Candy goes to that location the person is usually still there. This is an important fact, though seemingly innocent at first. Another important fact that seems innocent at the time is that the cats have consumed Samantha, the cat Frank killed. Violet reminds Candy that Samantha will always be with them, because she will always be a part of them all. This statement will be significant as the novel comes to a climactic end.



The reader can assume that the blood on Frank's hands and the scratches on his face are from Samantha the cat, though there is no explanation as to how Frank left the motel and visited his childhood home, then returned covered with blood, drawing the notice of no one. An explanation will be provided but it is important to remember that Frank has now woken from sleep three times with things he has no idea how he obtained or where. The bag filled with money, the black sand and the blood and scratches.



Chapters 21-25

Chapters 21-25 Summary

In chapter 21 Frank goes to the movies and then gets something to eat before returning to the motel. Unable to sleep on the blood-stained sheets, he strips the bed and lays there, trying to remember who he is; struggling for the slightest memory. Frank is unable to remember anything and tells himself that the amnesia is keeping him from sleeping however he realizes that in fact he is afraid. Unsure of where he goes when he sleep walks, or what he does, Frank's mind will not allow him to rest.

In chapter 22, Thomas is awake at Cielo Vista, unable to sleep. Thomas is worried about Julie and the Bad Thing that he senses is coming. Thomas had tried to tell Julie that he was worried when his sister had visited today, but could not find the words to do so and he is frustrated. Thomas had tried to TV a thought to Julie but Bobby had received his warning instead. Thomas thinks it is strange that his sister is unable to sense his thoughts and feelings but that Bobby is able to. At the window Thomas opens his feelings to the night and is knocked to the floor by the sense of evil that overwhelms him from outside. Thomas stays on the floor, TVing another warning to Bobby. Thomas wants Bobby to take Julie away from the Bad Thing that is coming.

In chapter 23 Bobby dreams that he is in the house that he and Julie will someday live in. He senses Julie near him in the dream and reaches for her but the dream changes quickly as he thinks that the Bad Thing is coming and he has the urge to run. The world in his dream tilts and the calm sea crashes around him and Julie, seeming to swallow his wife.

Bobby awakens from the nightmare, struggling from the horror. Barely able to move, Bobby finally struggles to the bathroom and splashes water on his face to help him wake up.

In chapter 24 Candy prowls the property around the house, hunting. He is very aware of his surroundings and considers it a gift from his mother. Candy feels that he is the most gifted of his siblings, though all have some gifts from their mother. Candy is hunting for blood, as he is a predator. To please his mother Candy tries to keep his taste for blood limited to animals, especially close to home. To kill close to home would arouse the suspicion of the police. Candy could only risk killing close to home if the person had done something to the family.

Candy prepares to hunt and raises his hands. A blue light emanates from his fingertips and vibrates the ground around him. The vibrations cause the animals that have been hiding in the dark to scurry for new cover and Candy quickly snatches a mouse that runs by, biting off its head and drinking its blood. Candy continues to cast out the light from his hands and it grows brighter as he drinks more blood. Candy catches a rabbit



and bites it, drinking its blood as well. His need is great and he casts the rabbit aside, walking further into the canyon to find more prey.

In chapter 25 Julie and Bobby meet Frank Pollard. Frank wants to hire the Dakotas to help him find out who he is and what he does while he is asleep. Clint Karaghiosis, one of their employees, has spoken with Frank and thinks they might be able to help him. Bobby seems intrigued, but Julie is cautious, unwilling to take on a case that might bring them closer to danger after the situation at Decodyne a few nights ago.

Frank tells those assembled about the events of the past few days, starting with the night in the alley. Bobby immediately wants to take the case but Julie calls him into the bathroom and makes him promise not to until they have heard everything. Julie is cautious, unable to believe that Pollard is an innocent as he seems.

Pollard continues his tale, telling Bobby and Julie how he tried to stay awake but could not. Frank had fallen asleep in his underwear and woken up fully dressed in clothes that were obviously his, but nothing that he had with him in the motel. Beside him was another bag filled with money. Julie once again has to take her husband aside and make him promise not to take the case. They return to the office and Frank presents them with items from other bag. The black sand and the bloody shirt. Frank tells the Dakotas that the other bag of money is at his motel, but he has no idea how much cash is there as he seems to have lost the ability to do anything that has to do with math. Frank reaches into a bag and removes a jar. Pollard dumps the jar onto the table revealing many red stones, possibly rubies of some kind, though he does not even know if they are valuable at all. Frank tells them that he woke up and found his pockets loaded with the stones. Removing another jar the group is stunned by a large beetle-like insect. Pollard is worried, telling them that he thinks that whatever he is involved in is a bad thing. Julie informs him that they will take his case while Bobby remembers the dream he had and the thoughts of a Bad Thing.

Bobby takes Julie aside and tells her that he does not want to take the case. Julie questions Bobby's feelings and he finally tells her of his feelings the morning they had made love and of his vivid dream and the Bad Thing. Julie does not argue, she simply begins to act like Bobby, diverting the conversation and talking around the subject. Bobby realizes that his wife is acting the way he would, and that they should take the case, even if only to find out what Pollard is involved in. The two return to the office and discuss things with a relieved Frank, explaining their fees and getting things started.

Chapters 21-25 Analysis

Sleep or the inability to sleep become central in the novel. Frank Pollard is afraid to sleep, unsure of what happens to him or what he does while sleeping. Thomas is unable to sleep, afraid of the Bad Thing that he senses will harm Julie. Bobby has a nightmare while sleeping, and wakes terrified that something is going to happen to his wife.



The reader learns that Thomas, though afflicted with Down's syndrome, has deep thoughts and feelings, not only about his condition, but those around him. Thomas is able to express himself clearly to the reader, though the writing is from the point of view of a childish mind. Thomas is worried about something he senses will bring those he loves harm, specifically Julie. The young man thinks about sending his thoughts to his sister and her inability to receive them. The reader learns that Bobby is able to receive the thoughts that Thomas sends him, something he calls TVing. Thomas compares his ability with the way images are broadcast to a television. When Thomas senses evil outside Cielo Vista, something bad enough to knock him to the ground, he immediately sends thoughts of the Bad Thing to Bobby, worried for his sister.

Thomas' thoughts translate into Bobby's nightmare where the sea churns and the waves swallow first Julie, then himself. Bobby is unaware that Thomas is sending his thoughts, or that the sense he was going to lose Julie a few days ago had been a message from Thomas. All Bobby knows for sure is that he is overwhelmed with a sense of dread and fear.

The mysterious blue light that destroyed the car Frank tried to escape in is revealed to come from Candy. The light emanates from his hands and Candy sends forth the pulsing wave of light to flush prey from the canyon as he hunts. Candy's power does not affect living things, which explains why Frank was not hurt directly, just the things around him. Candy once again drinks blood, but the blood of animals, trying to control himself so close to home. It is explained that killing close to home is unacceptable unless Candy's mother said someone deserved it. The drinking of blood is acceptable, even killing is acceptable; Candy's mother Roselle had taught him that God could not fault her son for the way that he was created.

Frank Pollard finally decides to get help and turns to the Dakotas. Julie is leery, unwilling to believe in the man's innocence. Bobby is intrigued by the story, enthralled by the seemingly supernatural elements. Julie twice has to caution her husband not to leap into things until they are sure. In the end it is Julie who has to convince Bobby to take the case. Bobby is reminded of his dream when Pollard says he must be involved in a bad thing.

An important but once again seemingly innocent statement is made when Pollard tells Bobby and Julie that he cannot remember how to do math and feels as if he is coming apart at the seams. This can be attributed to Pollard's lack of sleep, but will become extremely important as the novel progresses.

The items that Frank presents as evidence of his problem all seem normal enough, even the jar of gems, until he shows them the large insect he found crawling on his chest. The bug is something no one has ever seen. As the novel progresses the insect's origins will be revealed.



Chapters 26-30

Chapters 26-30 Summary

Violet soars above the ground, her mind melded with that of a hawk hunting. While in the hawk, Violet is also in bed with her sister and their minds are joined as well. The hawk and Violet spot a mouse far below, and the bird dives, grabbing the creature. Violet joins the mind of the mouse and relishes the sensation of being the hawk rending the animal's flesh, and the feelings of the mouse as it is devoured. Sharing her thoughts, Verbina curls against her sister, naked, and they enjoy the overload of sensations.

In chapter 27, Thomas thinks about the Bad Thing he had sensed the other night. Thomas's biggest fear is that the scary thing he senses will take Julie to the Bad Place. Thomas believes that once you die you go to the Bad Place. The Bad Place is Death. Since Death is something that Thomas cannot picture, it is terrifying to him because once you are there you cannot come back and see the people that you love.

In chapter 28 Candy weeps at his mother's grave, missing her intensely. Gradually Candy pulls himself together, realizing that his grief has turned to anger. Candy swears at his mother's grave that he will punish Frank for killing her. He will kill Frank, as well as anyone who ever felt sorry for him; anyone who helped him.

In chapter 29 Clint takes the black sand and the blood-stained shirt to Palomar Laboratories for analysis. He meets Lisa, a new employee who flirts with no result. Lisa tells Clint that the black sand reminds her of some beaches in Hawaii. Eventually Lisa asks Clint out, but he refuses, telling the young woman he is gay. Lisa feels a bit better about his refusal and Clint heads back into the rain.

In chapter 30 Julie and Bobby are in the hospital with Frank. The Dakotas have arranged for Frank to be monitored while he sleeps. Hal Yamataka, one of their employees, will stay with Frank and make sure he does not sleepwalk. Frank is uncomfortable but Bobby and Julie reassure him. As they leave Julie assures Frank that Hal will look after him.

Chapters 26-30 Analysis

Violet and Verbina have the ability to dwell in the minds of animals, as described when Violet experiences the flight and hunt of the hawk. The fact that they enjoy the sensation of being both the hunter and the prey reveals that the twins are as abnormal as their brother Candy. The joy they experience borders on sexual, as does the relationship they share. The revelation that the sisters co-exist in their own bodies as well as those of the pack of cats that constantly surround them, gives new insight to the cat that watched Frank when he woke up in the alley trying to escape from Candy. Violet refers to the fact that Candy is "gifted" and the reader assumes that she is referring to the blue light that



pulses from his hands, affecting the objects around him. Candy will reveal just how gifted he is later in the novel.

Thomas' intelligence shines through, despite his disabilities. Julie's brother is innocent, but cares deeply for those around him. Though he has difficulty expressing his thoughts and feelings, Thomas is clear in his feelings about the Bad Thing, which one can assume involves Frank Pollard and Candy in some way, and the Bad Place. The Bad Place is Death, in Thomas' mind. Though he is aware of the idea of Heaven and Hell, to Thomas the Bad Place is where you go when you die. Being unable to see those you love, to exist in darkness, is a horrible thought for Thomas, but it is interesting that he fears his sister going to the Bad Place more than he does himself.

Clint is presented as a quiet man, who communicates as little as possible, speaking only when necessary and not offering any more of himself than is needed. The young woman at the lab is attracted to Clint, disappointed when he reveals that he is gay. The idle chatter that Lisa keeps up seems innocuous, however she reveals an important fact about where black sand can be found that will figure into the novel later.

It seems logical for Julie and Bobby to begin their investigation by trying to find out where Frank goes while he is sleeping. Frank is not comfortable in the hospital, unsure if he can trust anyone, but Julie and Bobby reassure him as best they can. Hal also promises to keep Frank safe, however no one can imagine what danger could possibly involved in sleeping.

Candy's vow to kill Frank for killing their mother seems logical considering the fact that he clearly worshiped her; however his vow to kill anyone who has helped Frank, or even felt sorry for him, shows the deep level of his hatred. It also clearly ties Candy to the Dakotas, as they and their employees are helping Frank.



Chapters 31-35

Chapters 31-35 Summary

In chapter 31 Clint takes the strange insect to the home of Dr. Dyson Manfred. Clint gives Manfred the specimen in the jar and the doctor is amazed. He promises to dissect it with the utmost care, but tells Clint that it is a new creature, yet undiscovered and will be history making. Clint tells Manfred that his keeping the specimen will depend on the client's wishes.

In chapter 32 Bobby and Julie try to track down the George Farris ID that Frank has. They go to the address and find a Vietnamese family living there. The family tells them George Farris had died of cancer several years ago and they purchased the house from the widow's estate. They explain that Mrs. Farris, her two daughters and her brother were murdered in the house and that the mother and one of the daughters had bite marks as well. Julie asks for more information and they give the Dakotas the name of Mrs. Farris' brother that handled the estate. No one recognizes the photo of Frank.

In chapter 33, Thomas can sense the Bad Thing outside in the rain and tries to get a closer look. Thomas knows that the Bad Thing is a man, but something else too. Frightened of the power that the man possesses, Thomas hides in bed.

Candy hunts in the canyon and feels someone touch his head as he tears into his prey. Back at the Pollard house Violet and Verbina watch their brother through the eyes of two of their cats. Violet becomes sexually aroused as she enters the mind of the squirrel that Candy bites into.

In chapter 34 Bobby and Julie meet with Mrs. Farris's brother. He provides a picture of George and his sister and Farris is clearly not Frank. They move on to the house of James Roman. The house is gone, but they meet the neighbor. The former marine tells Bobby and Julie that James Roman died in a helicopter crash several years ago. The man cleans the meticulous kitchen while he tells the Dakotas that two months ago he had woken up to the Roman's house on fire. Everyone inside had perished. Julie and Bobby leave, wondering if the Roman family had been murdered the same way as the Farris family, but the killer had burned the house down to cover the bite marks on the victims.

In chapter 35 Clint drives home. His wife Felina is in the kitchen waiting for him. Felina is deaf, and Clint relates the events of the day to her while she reads his lips and signs questions. Clint shows Felina one of the red gems that Frank had in the jar at the office. Felina thinks it is pretty but warns Clint not to lose it. The light of the kitchen shines through the stone, casting red spots on Felina's face. Clint is filled with a sense of dread and quickly puts the stone away.



Chapters 31-35 Analysis

Bobby and Julie discover that both of the fake IDs that Frank carries belong to dead men. The Dakotas do not find this unusual, as frequently people take names of the deceased in order to make identification. What is deeply disturbing is that the families of both men were murdered violently within a relatively short time. While meeting with the Phans, Bobby and Julie are horrified to learn that the Harris family had been killed in their home and that two of the victims had been bitten.

At the site of the Roman family home the Dakotas discover that the house has been destroyed by fire. Meeting with the neighbor, Park Hampstead, Bobby and Julie learn that the retired military man had developed a strong relationship with the Roman family and guess that the family had been murdered before their house had been set on fire. It appears that the fire may have been set to cover up any connection between the murders of the Harris family and the Roman family. Showing a photo of Frank to Hampstead and the Phan family proves fruitless; no one recognizes Frank. The Dakotas obtain a photo of George Harris from his brother-in-law, Mr. Havalow, and it is obviously not Frank.

A bit about Clint is revealed to the reader. While performing tasks for the agency Clint is silent, speaking only when necessary, and revealing nothing about himself. The reader learns that Clint is married, despite telling the woman at the lab that he is gay. Clint's wife Felina is obviously important to him and the love she has for him is evident as well. The two have no problem communicating despite the fact that Felina is deaf. Clint worries about her, but forces himself to remember that she has lived without injury for almost 30 years.

Felina enjoys hearing about the day's events from her husband, and is impressed with the stone that he shows her. The red light that reflects on Felina's face is upsetting to Clint, however, and he vows to return the stone as soon as possible, not wanting it near his wife.

Thomas once again tries to discover the source of the Bad Thing that he senses in the night. Worried about his sister, Thomas overcomes his fear. Candy is hunting and Thomas is horrified by the Bad Things that he can feel. Aware now that what he senses is a man, but a man with something else within him, Thomas is able to break away from Candy before Pollard is able to discover what the strange sense he has of being touched is. The reader also witnesses the ability of Violet to experience the feelings of animals when she enters the mind of the squirrel her brother kills for its blood. The sexual excitement that Violet shares with her sister is graphic as well as the thrill she seems to get by imagining Candy's hands on her body instead of the squirrel's.



Chapters 36-40

Chapters 36-40 Summary

In chapter 36, Hal Yamataka hears an odd noise and finds Frank is gone. Startled, Hal enlists the help of the staff in locating Pollard. Hearing flute-like music Hal turns to find Frank in bed talking about fireflies in a windstorm before he vanishes again. Frank appears again, begging Hal to stop him. Before Hal can react, Frank disappears again, along with the metal bed rail he had been gripping. Unable to overcome his shock, Hal dials the Dakotas at home.

In chapter 37 Bobby and Julie drive to the hospital. Arriving at the hospital the two hear the tale of Hal's experience with Frank. The three investigators settle in to wait, and witness Frank appearing and vanishing a few more times before he returns for good. Frank is obviously shaken. Hal points out that when Frank had vanished originally he had been wearing pajamas, but is now dressed. Frank is weak, and the Dakotas need to get him out of the hospital without being seen. Bobby notices that his clothing seems odd, then realizes that patches of Frank's shirt have been woven into his pants and vice versa.

In chapter 38 Candy lies in bed wondering who or what had been trying to find out who he was and what he wanted. Getting up and showering, Candy vows that if the presence ever returns he will try and use his mind to find the source.

In chapter 39, Julie, Bobby, Hal and Frank return to the office. Hal discovers that something is wrong with the zipper on Frank's pants. Bobby investigates and realizes that some of the zipper teeth are now rubber. Checking Frank's shoe, Bobby discovers the missing metal zipper teeth. The Dakotas discuss teleporting with Frank, who cannot believe that this is what is happening to him. Frank is obviously exhausted, and worried that regardless of what is happening to him that he will not live much more. While Frank and Bobby try and trace Frank through the computers, Hal and Julie discuss things thus far. Hal reminds Julie that Frank had heard the flute music before Mr. Blue Light had followed him. The fact that there is another person that can tele-port brings them both up short.

Bobby and Frank are able to use the computers to track Frank, for whom they discover a name, Francis Ezekiel Pollard, as well as an address in El Encanto Heights. Frank had not known who he was until he sees it for himself. He has no memory of his hometown, but hearing El Encanto makes him feel ill. The investigators are pleased with their headway, but Frank does not feel that it is fast enough. It occurs to Bobby, and then Frank, that Frank's body might not be re-assembling itself correctly when he teleports, just like his clothing.

In chapter 40, Thomas wakes up happy that it is daytime. Turning he has a vision of Derek, dead in bed with scissors in his stomach. Realizing that Derek is in the shower,



Thomas thinks that the vision of his friend being dead is something that might happen in the future. As the two men head to breakfast, Thomas tells Derek that if he ever tells him that the Bad Thing is coming, he should run. Derek is confused, but promises to do so.

Chapters 36-40 Analysis

The sudden disappearance of Frank Pollard from under the watchful eye of Hal Yamataka is a discovery that explains why Frank Pollard had not been aware of where he was at the beginning of the novel. Though such an experience is obviously out of the norm, Hal reacts like a true professional, securing the area and keeping the staff of the hospital from finding out the truth about Pollard. Pollard's quick visits in and out of the bed, leaving traces of sand and a bag of money, lead the reader to believe that he is going somewhere and doing something, but at this point it is speculation.

The deteriorated mental and physical state of Frank Pollard is a bit disturbing, especially taking into consideration the fact that his clothing is not re-assembling itself correctly when he finally returns to the hospital for good. The thought occurs to Bobby that the same might be true of Frank's mind and body, but Dakota does not voice his thoughts aloud. Bobby truly likes Frank, and wishes to help him and does not want to worry Pollard unnecessarily. Frank figures it out for himself and voices his alarm to Bobby. The fact that Frank has forgotten how to read and perform simple math reveals that there is obviously more going on internally. Frank's concern that he will be unable to survive much longer is ominous.

The discussion that Hal and Julie have about Mr. Blue Light, the name they have given the man following Frank, is a bit disturbing as well. Though the two have no way of knowing that Candy is the man that they speak of, it is clear to the reader who has witnessed Candy use the pulsing light from his hands to flush his prey from the burrows in the canyon. The two also realize that if the man chasing Frank is also able to teleport, Frank is not a singular person with the ability, but one of at least two. They also discuss the fact that if the person that is after Frank can teleport, there is really no way to keep him safe.

Discovering the true identity of Frank is important, as well as his reaction. Though his name does not bother him, the name of his hometown makes Frank feel ill. There is obviously some sort of reason for the feeling, but at this point the reader can only speculate.

Candy's confusion over the sense that someone was watching him the night before is clearly upsetting to a man used to being in control. Though Candy has never had the ability to communicate psychically, he vows that if he senses the presence again he will try and discover the source. This is significant, foreshadowing some type of contact between Candy and Thomas.

The vision that Thomas has of his friend Derek dying violently is also a sign of the future contact between Candy and himself. Thomas is terrified, and tries to warn Derek to run if Thomas warns him to. Derek is clearly confused, but tries to understand, ever hopeful of pleasing his friend.



Chapters 41-45

Chapters 41-45 Summary

In chapter 41, Bobby grabs Clint when he arrives at the office and the two head back to Palomar Labs for the test results. The two men find out that the black substance in the jar is black sand, and the blood on Frank's shirt is cat blood. Lisa, the receptionist tells Bobby and Clint about beaches in Hawaii that have black sand, and suggests that Clint take Bobby there since they are "special friends."

In chapter 42 Julie meets with Lee Chen, the computer specialist at Dakota and Dakota. Chen is unfazed by the tale that Julie relates about Frank. Chen tells Julie he can try to trace the money but it will take hours and most likely not amount to anything.

Chapter 43 finds Bobby and Clint with a jeweler. The man tells Bobby that the red stones are red diamonds, one of the rarest stones, worth millions. They continue to Dr. Manfred's house and find the entomologist with another man. The two men are excited and inform Bobby and Clint that the insect is not a live creature at all, but an engineered life form. The creature eats dirt and its internal workings turn the debris into red diamonds.

In chapter 44 Bobby and Clint visit Thomas. Clint takes the book of poems that Thomas has been working on and sits quietly while Bobby and Thomas talk. Bobby tells Thomas that the case they are working on might prevent a visit from Julie until the following week. Thomas worries that the case is going to bring the Bad Thing to Julie, but cannot figure out a way to tell Bobby.

In chapter 45, a hypnotist works with Frank. The man takes Frank back in time and Frank reacts strongly, stating he is at "her" house, explaining that his mother has been dead for seven years. Suddenly Frank cries out in terror that his brother Candy is there and coming for him. The hypnotist is unable to calm Frank, and Bobby tries to sooth him, touching his arm. Frank cannot be soothed, and disappears and takes Bobby with him.

Chapters 41-45 Analysis

The items that Dakota and Dakota have sent to the lab are analyzed and Bobby and Clint stop by to get the results. Lisa, the receptionist mistakes Bobby for Clint's lover, as she believed Clint when he told her he was gay. This makes Lisa suggest that Clint take Bobby to Hawaii to visit the beaches with black sand. The two men also find out that the blood on Frank's shirt is cat's blood. While this is strange, Bobby is relieved that Frank had not killed anyone. Further, the fact that the blood is that of a cat is significant. It would seem that the blood on Frank's shirt must be that of Violet's cat.



The knowledge that the sand and blood seem innocent enough despite the odd way that Frank discovered them is overshadowed by the discovery that the red stone is actually a rare red diamond worth millions. This is stunning to both Bobby and Clint. Corvaire tells the two men that there are only seven known specimens in the world. This news, coupled with the discovery of Dr. Manfred and Dr. Gavenall, throws the minds of Bobby and Clint into a whirlwind. The creature that Frank has given to Bobby is strange as an insect. Bobby and Clint are informed that the "bug" has actually been created purposely. Stranger, the purpose of the creature is to mine through some type of dirt, process it, and produce the red diamonds as waste.

Julie works with Lee Chen to try and trace the source of the mass amounts of money that Frank has. No consecutive bills leads Chen to believe that the money has not been stolen while still banded as new. Julie informs him that the money all looks well circulated. This seems to signify that however Frank is coming to have the funds, he is not stealing it from a bank.

Frank meanwhile is upset not only because he has no idea who he is, but also because he feels responsible for the deaths of the Harris and Roman families. Though Julie is still upset about the things that have been going on, she does not feel that Frank is responsible; he is a victim as well.

The visit to Thomas will be an important factor in the climax of the novel, though it seems very innocent at the time. Thomas' struggle to find the words to warn Bobby is touching, expressing the young man's love for his sister and emphasizing his disability without making him a pitiful character. Thomas seems to be very intelligent, but has difficulty processing information. Clint figures minimally in this passage, however it is his visit that will trigger catastrophe later.

The hypnotist, Jackie Jaxx is a comical character, working in show business and dressing the part of an old fashioned performer on the Vegas strip. Despite his appearance, Jaxx is very good at what he does, and he is able to take Frank back in time, though no answers are forthcoming. What is revealed is that Frank seems to teleport during times of stress. The reader also learns that Frank can take someone with him, since Bobby is ripped from the room with him when Frank disappears.



Chapters 46-50

Chapters 46-50 Summary

In chapter 46 Bobby and Frank travel through darkness studded with thousands of fireflies. The two men stop in a rain forest, then they travel again, landing in an apartment in San Diego, then to Frank's childhood home, with Frank's terror growing as they progress. The two teleport to a study where a man sits, Frank refers to him as Doc. Quickly they leave, arriving at a cemetery where Frank informs Bobby that his neighbor is buried, killed by Candy for being rude at the orders of their mother. Back to the study of Doc Fogarty, then to Frank's house where they arrive in the back yard. Violet is in the doorway and the pack of cats attack; Frank is able to get them out of there just in time. They arrive in Hawaii on Punaluu beach. Frank explains that all of the places they have been are places he has hidden from Candy. Bobby is angry at Frank for lying about his amnesia, but Frank explains that he cannot remember where he has been or why unless teleporting. Frank informs Bobby that he had not even realized that he could teleport until the day he had killed his mother. Bobby is not willing to travel with Frank any longer, and walks toward a restaurant on the beach. Before they can get there Candy arrives, having found them by touching the grass where they stood on the back lawn. The two men are able to teleport just in time, arriving in India, then Japan, with a stop on Mount Fuji. Finally the two men stop in a crater, surrounded by the diamond mining creatures. The sky is strange and there is a strange aircraft in the air. Bobby realizes that he is not on earth any longer, just as Frank disappears.

In chapter 47, Bobby is in the crater with the creatures when the ship overhead moves and sends off throbbing tones. The insects scurry away, and Bobby realizes they have been called. Bobby looks for somewhere to hide from the lights that flash in the crater and finds the railing from Frank's hospital bed. Frank returns and the two men teleport back to Hawaii, then to another beach, and finally into the offices of Dakota and Dakota. Bobby breaks free of Frank as Pollard disappears again. Bobby relates the tale of the teleporting and strangeness, all of which took place in less than an hour. Frank has still not returned, and Bobby tells Julie that he is afraid Frank will not be able to stop himself this time.

In chapter 48 Candy returns to his kitchen, angry at missing Frank. The cats sit on the table, eating with Violet and Verbina. Candy strikes out, his rage overcoming his restraint. Violet is excited by her brother, and comments on the fact that the cats and Verbina like the feeling of his hands on her. Disgusted, Candy runs to his room, and settles into memories of his mother, Roselle. Candy remembers drinking his mother's blood, feeling her love for him. The memories of performing tasks for his mother comforts him, from the murder of a six month old baby to the destruction of an entire family in New York. Candy lived for pleasing his mother and misses her terribly. The rage continues to grow when Candy feels the touch of someone, knowing it is whoever has been reaching into his mind. Smiling, Candy sits calmly, waiting for the opportunity to strike.



In chapter 49 Felina has a visit from her neighbor, Alice. Alice has come to tell Felina that Clint called and wanted her to know that he would be late and would take Felina out to dinner. The two women make plans to visit on Saturday, and Alice leaves.

In chapter 50 Hal returns to the office to keep an eye out in case Frank returns. Clint tells Hal that if Frank returns he should drive him to the hotel where Julie and Bobby will be staying. The Dakotas will be driving to Santa Barbara to check into Frank's past.

Julie, Bobby and Chen are discussing where Frank might have gotten the money. Chen thinks Frank might have been visiting Vegas and the vaults there.

Bobby and Julie race home to pack for the trip to Santa Barbara. Bobby is unsure what the rush is and suggests they just forget the whole thing. Julie tells Bobby they cannot and he knows it, but Bobby still cannot figure out why they feel so compelled. Julie refuses to enlighten him, telling her husband that he will have to figure it out, and that he will not be happy when he does.

Chapters 46-50 Analysis

Bobby learns a great deal about Frank and his life while the two are teleporting from place to place rapidly. Frank travels when he is under duress, fleeing from his brother Candy. Bobby is angry at Frank for lying to them, but Frank explains that he truly has no memory of his past life when he is not traveling from place to place.

Frank tells Bobby about the horrific life he has lived and that he killed his mother seven years previously. Pollard had no idea that he could teleport until he was backed against the wall by Candy, who was going to kill him. Frank explains that Candy was his mother's favorite and that Candy would kill on his mother's orders, while the two stand at the grave of Frank's former neighbor. Bobby is disgusted when Frank tells him of the time Candy arrived with an infant, one he had taken from someone, and ripped its throat out, drinking its blood. The tales are terrible, and Bobby begins to understand why Frank "jumps" when his brother is near.

The places they visit are places where Frank lived, until Candy tracked him and he had been forced to flee. The exception to this is the odd, off-planet, location where Bobby is left in the crater with the engineered insects that create the red diamonds. Though Bobby is obviously frightened when Frank leaves him there, an important fact is learned when Frank returns. Though Pollard insists that he has no idea where he is going, Bobby points out that Frank had returned to get him, exhibiting some type of control.

Bobby also has his first confrontation with Candy when Frank's brother tracks them to the beach in Hawaii. Bobby had been a bit skeptical about the fear Frank felt until he was face to face with Candy himself. The pure rage that Candy expresses was enough to make Bobby willing to travel with Frank without question.

Despite the fact that Bobby vanishes with Frank, Julie manages to hold herself together, counting on the love they have for each other to return Bobby. The staff of Dakota and



Dakota take the events in stride, despite the fact that there is something clearly supernatural or otherwise going on.

Thomas tries to reach out to Candy again and find out what is going on. Thomas is afraid, but clearly cares for his sister. Willing to sacrifice himself to keep Julie safe, Thomas tries again and Candy is able to lure him into a sense of peace that will wind up trapping him. Throughout the novel Thomas has been the connection between Candy and the Dakotas and this will prove to be the key to the climactic end.

Candy's confrontation with his sisters is important because he has always thought of himself as a patient person, caring for them because he promised his mother that he would. Violet's sexual reaction to Candy's touch enrages him and he loses control of the situation quickly, reacting as much in anger as fear.

While Candy waits for Thomas to try and reach him and calms himself after the confrontation with Violet, the reader learns that Candy has been his mother's pawn his entire life. Whatever talents Candy has have been exploited by Roselle Pollard for her own advantage, under the guise of love. Candy killed at a very young age at his mother's request, and continues to do so in order to please her. Candy also developed his taste for blood from his mother, who would cut herself and let Candy drink from her, in order to make him feel special. In this way, Candy is able to rationalize his desire for blood. If his mother encouraged it, there cannot be anything wrong with it.



Chapters 51-57

Chapters 51-57 Summary

In chapter 51 Candy waits until Thomas reaches out again and is able to get a sense of who he is and where. Candy teleports to Cielo Vista as Thomas is trying to warn Derek to run. Candy kills Derek and comes after Thomas. The two struggle, with Candy making disparaging remarks about the fact that Thomas has Down's syndrome. To save his sister Thomas fights through the pain and stabs Candy with the scissors that Pollard has used to kill Derek, just like Thomas had seen in his vision. Candy stabs Thomas and the young man realizes he is dying. Before he leaves for the Bad Place, Thomas sends thoughts to Bobby that the Bad Thing is coming and to keep Julie safe.

Bobby and Julie rush home to get the items they need to spend the night on the road and investigate Frank's past. They are in and out of the house within minutes. Julie considers along the way telling Bobby the real reason they are both sticking with Frank's case. Not just to help Frank, though Bobby is a generally nice person, but because they both see the chance to make good money and cash out, achieving the Dream.

At Cielo Vista Candy is angry at himself for killing Thomas before he has answers. Touching the things in the room, Candy comes across the poem book that Clint had looked at while visiting. From this Candy is able to zero in on Clint and his location. Before teleporting away, Candy sets the building on fire, destroying Cielo Vista.

In chapter 52, Candy teleports to Clint's house and finds the deaf Felina unaware of his arrival. Thrilled, Candy attacks and bites, drinking her blood until her heart stops. Clint arrives and Candy is surprised and afraid by his reaction. Clint seems to recognize him, and even says his name. Candy is unsure of how to react, giving Clint time to fire his weapon. Candy is wounded but quickly teleports home, leaving the bullet that wounded him in Clint's house.

After a period of recovery, Candy returns to Clint's home, hoping to catch him off guard. Candy is once again surprised. Clint has carried Felina's body to the bedroom, and lies down beside her. While Candy watches, Clint kills himself.

Bobby is sickened by the images that Thomas sends him, though he is unsure at that moment that Thomas has tried to contact him. Julie wonders what is wrong, but Bobby does not want to worry her and convinces his wife to drive onward, that he has nothing more than a bad headache.

In chapter 53 Candy arrives at the offices of Dakota and Dakota. While Lee Chen works in the computer room unaware, Candy battles Hal. Hal strikes some blows, but in the end Candy wins, shoving Hal out a window where he plummets to his death. From the office Candy is able to get a sense of Julie and teleports to the Dakota's house. Lee



Chen leaves the lab after Candy disappears and finds the broken window and discovers that Hal is dead.

Bobby and Julie talk on the drive and Bobby tries to keep things light, but in the end tells Julie that he is worried about her brother, Thomas. They pull over and try to call the home but are informed of line trouble. Bobby wants to turn around, sensing that Thomas needs them. Julie discourages this, they are already more than halfway to their destination.

In chapter 54 Lee Chen retrieves the address book from the front desk and calls the police, speaking to Detective Kyle Ostov. There is confusion when Ostov believes that Lee is calling about the murder of Thomas. Ostov informs him that Thomas and Derek are dead. Lee tells the detective that he is calling him about Hal, dead in the courtyard below the building.

Bobby and Julie check into a motel in Santa Barbara and Bobby calls the office. He is informed by Lee that Thomas is dead, as well as Hal, Clint and Felina. Julie is devastated, sure that Candy is responsible. Julie informs her husband that she refuses to dream any longer, as dreams do not come true. Bobby argues with her and the two hit the road, Julie determined to bring the case to a conclusion.

Bobby tells Julie about the visit to the study of Doc Fogarty while they drive. They manage to track him down and arrive at his house. Doc seems to expect them. The two notice, but pay no heed to the two cats that watch them enter the home. Doc leads them to his study, where Frank sits in an almost catatonic state. Then kindly looking doctor is not what he seems. Fogarty is actually an extremely nasty, jaded man, who works as a doctor only for the money, willing to do whatever needed to make money.

In chapter 55, Fogarty relates the tale of the Pollard family, to the utter disgust of Julie and Bobby. Roselle Pollard, Frank's mother, was a child of rape and incest. Her father had been on drugs and Doc believes that this caused Roselle to be born as a hermaphrodite, with fully functional male and female sex organs. Roselle believed that she was a gift from God, and after her own mother's suicide, Roselle impregnated herself. Bobby and Julie are horrified and Doc Fogarty gleefully tells them how he anticipated the birth of the freak child that Roselle was sure to have. Unfortunately, Frank seemed normal. The twins also appeared normal. Only Candy was deformed, born with four testes and no penis. For years Candy had produced twice the normal testosterone of a normal man, with no way to release it. This explains Candy's size, as well as his aggressive behavior.

The entire time Fogarty relates this tale, Frank sits, not reacting, barely moving. On the porch the cats listen, and Violet hears, entranced with the tale of her family. At the family home, she finally rises, and tells Candy that Frank is in town, at Fogarty's house. Candy travels there immediately, as Julie rails at the doctor for doing nothing about the Pollard family. The doctor is unrepentant, telling the Dakotas that it was simply not his job.



Candy arrives in the study and grabs Julie. Frank barely reacts, but Candy tells him not to flee or he will feed on Julie. Candy tells Frank to come to the house with 15 minutes or he will kill Julie and drink her blood. He then teleports away, taking Julie with him.

In chapter 56, Bobby reacts in anger, trying to get Frank to wake from his stupor. Frank is barely responsive, with bits of bugs and such melded with his skin from his teleporting after he had left Bobby at the office. By reminding Frank of their friendship, Bobby is finally able to get through to him. Bobby tells Frank that he might not be able to save him, but he can make sure his life was worth something. The two men leave the evil doctor and drive to the Pollard home.

Julie is in the kitchen with Candy and the twins. Bobby enters with Frank, joyous that his wife is alive. Frank looks at his sisters and the pack of cats around them and comments that "mother" is still with them. Candy is enraged as Violet tells him that after he had buried their mother, she and Verbina had dug up the body and the cats had consumed her. Candy rips Violet's throat out and she seems to be sexually aroused until she dies. He quickly dispatches Verbina the same way.

Frank takes Candy's hand and teleports from the kitchen. Bobby asks Julie to avert her eyes, but she refuses, and witnesses the re-entry and exit of Frank and Candy. The two teleport and return several times, gradually melding together into a monstrous creature, eventually one being with no mind, and no way to survive; Frank and Candy, as well as insects and rats, and God knows what else, in one un-living mass on the floor of the kitchen.

In chapter 57, Bobby and Julie are in a small house, the house of their dreams. The Dakotas are living their altered Dream, without Thomas, but still on the beach in California. They finance their life with the cash and the red diamonds that Frank left behind in the vault at the office. They are happy, but sad as well, understanding that by pursuing their dream so aggressively, they have caused much collateral damage amongst their friends.

Chapters 51-57 Analysis

The events of the novel continue to build toward a climactic end. Thomas continues to try and save his sister, unwittingly providing the key for Candy to find her. Candy, though "different" himself, mocks Thomas when he finally meets him, calling him stupid and declaring that people like him should be killed. This is important, because Candy himself is "different." though his mother convinced him that his birth defects and paranormal abilities were a gift from God. The fact that Candy does not recognize anyone else with differences as special shows the reader that Candy is unable to feel any type of empathy, caring only about his wants, and what he believes are his mother's wishes.

Bobby and Julie have pursued their Dream, but this time their desire to live the dream has lead them into a nightmare. The Dakotas' belief that they can help Frank is overshadowed by the fact that he seems to have an unlimited supply of wealth. This



clouds their thinking and leads them down the path that will result in the deaths of so many they care about.

Candy's ultimate destruction comes at the hands of Frank, who has spent the entire novel running in fear. Frank has always felt that he had no value, and no purpose in life. Bobby provides him with one but the cost is to sacrifice himself. Frank has always felt alone in the world, different, even within his own family, where special abilities are the norm. Frank is different from his siblings; with the ability to care for others over himself. Frank's dream is to be normal. There is no way that this could ever be, so Frank chooses to make his life worth something, by teleporting with Candy, absorbing his brother's evil, and ending Candy's reign of terror.

Bobby and Julie continue to try and live the Dream, knowing that their actions have cost them more than money can ever buy. The two live comfortably on the money that Frank left behind, but know that it was their Dream that cost them what they cherished most.



Characters

Bobby Dakota

Bobby Dakota, married to Julie Dakota, is the owner of Dakota and Dakota, a private investigation firm. Bobby is a lover of swing music and a perpetually happy person, entranced with life and all the good things in it. Bobby lives life for the moment, unwilling to consider that bad things can happen to good people until he meets Frank Pollard, an amnesiac searching for the truth about his identity and what happens while he is asleep.

Bobby loves his wife and his brother-in-law Thomas, and wants to sell the agency and retire to a life of joy and love with the two of them. Dakota sees Frank Pollard as the chance to do this, first because of the odd story that Pollard tells and the large amount of cash he turns up with after sleeping, and then because of the extremely odd events that unfold. Frank teleports while he is sleeping, journeying to far away and sometimes celestial places and at one point takes Bobby along for the ride.

Despite Bobby's desire to cash out of the life he leads, he is at heart a good and decent man, unwilling to leave Frank to the hell that his life has become. Bobby and his wife Julie perform above and beyond to help a man they have no ties to, other than the fact that they have accepted him as a client. Bobby spends his time in awe of the events that occur around him and in horror when Frank Pollard's life causes darkness and devastation in the lives of those he cares for most.

Julie Dakota

Julie Dakota is married to Bobby Dakota and his full partner in their private investigation firm, Dakota and Dakota. Julie loves swing music as much as her husband, but is the more level-headed of the two. Julie seems to spend most of her time pulling Bobby's head out of the clouds and reminding him that they have a focus and goal in life; to build their agency's reputation, sell before the danger that they sometimes get involved with catches up with them and retire to their Dream. Julie's Dream includes being able to have her brother Thomas come live with them and to care for him in a home setting, living a quiet life on the water somewhere on the coast of California.

Upon meeting Frank Pollard Julie is concerned that Bobby will think with his heart instead of his head and get them involved in what she sees as a crackpot with amnesia. Julie herself becomes intrigued and winds up having to convince her husband that they should take the case.

Throughout the novel Julie Dakota is the more level-headed of the partners, even when her husband is teleported all over the world with Frank Pollard on one of his sleep induced jaunts. Julie stays strong, refusing to succumb to the strange events that take place around her, tackling the case with intelligence and determination, even when her



brother becomes an unwitting victim to the killer that stalks Frank Pollard in pursuit of revenge.

In the end Julie remains strong, holding fast to her Dream, and attaining it, though not without huge personal loss along the way.

Frank Pollard

Frank Pollard wakes up in an alley, unsure of anything except that someone is after him. The second discovery Frank makes is that he is doing something while he is asleep that he has absolutely no memory of. Frank is determined to find out who he is and what he does and he retains the services of Bobby and Julie Dakota in order to do so.

Frank is the troubled brother of Candy, Violet and Verbina Pollard. Frank is being hunted by his brother Candy, who seeks revenge for the murder of their mother. While Candy sees his mother as a saint, Frank sees her for what she was, an evil woman who manipulated her children. While Candy willingly murdered at his mother's request "for the good of the family," Frank escaped the horror of his youth.

Frank teleports around the world and beyond in an effort to escape his brother's vengeance. The more Frank travels, the more of himself he loses along the way as his body cells fail to reassemble in the proper order. Frank begins by losing his memory of who he is, then the ability to perform simple math tasks, then reading. Eventually Frank begins to feel as if he is coming apart. Hypnosis opens the door of his memory and the horror he flees from, putting Bobby and everyone in danger.

Frank sacrifices himself in the end, knowing that he will get no better and that the senseless killing will continue unless his brother is stopped. To save his new friends Frank risks his own life, willing to die to save them all and prevent more deaths.

Thomas

Thomas is the younger brother of Julie Dakota. Thomas has Down's syndrome and lives in Ciela Vista, a home for the disabled. Though Thomas misses living with his sister, he feels safe in Cielo Vista, as the hustle and bustle of the outside world confuses and scares him. Thomas is also scared by his ability to see things. Though he does not understand his ability, Thomas has psychic abilities, and is able to transmit and receive thoughts. Thomas has tried to use this ability to send thoughts to his sister in the past, but is surprised when his brother-in-law Bobby is able to receive them.

Thomas senses danger in regard to his sister Julie and the sensation is stronger after she and Bobby visit him in the residential home. Thomas tries to track down the basis for his fears throughout the novel, and Candy Pollard is eventually able to trace the source back to Thomas through his psychic connection. Candy has difficulty at first because of Thomas' mental disabilities, but once the connection is made Candy is able to teleport to Thomas and trace his connection to Frank.



Thomas dies trying to save his sister but learns that the Bad Place he envisioned death to be is not actually bad, and that his loved ones wait for him there with open arms and the love and security that he has longed for for so long.

Candy Pollard

The brother of Frank Pollard, James "Candy" Pollard has the same ability to teleport that Frank does. Candy also has the ability to send pulses of blue light from his fingertips, causing pulses of energy to affect inanimate objects around him. Candy does this in pursuit of his brother Frank, but also when hunting in the canyons behind his home. Candy disturbs the wildlife around him and snatches animals as they flee, biting them and drinking their blood.

Candy has an unnatural relationship with his mother until her death at the hands of his brother Frank seven years earlier. Candy is intent on making Frank pay for murdering their mother, as well as anyone who has helped him through the years. This fact puts Bobby and Julie Dakota directly in harm's way. Candy is able to track items that people touch and teleport to their current location. This ability makes it fairly simple for Candy to track Frank once he is able to tie into the psychic link he has with Julie's brother Thomas.

Candy is eventually destroyed after he takes Julie Dakota hostage in order to gain access to his brother Frank. Frank, already coming apart at the seams because of his abilities, takes hold of Candy and teleports rapidly and continuously until the two men are melded into one being, one without a mind or ability to function.

Violet Pollard

One of Frank and Candy's twin sisters, Violet is the sister who communicates with the world, as opposed to her sister Verbina. Violet had been somewhat autistic until the age of six when she began to speak. Violet and her sister share the ability to meld their minds with the creatures around them, especially the pack of cats that live with them in the Pollard house. Violet often shares the minds of the cats around her, using them to see things and follow people to find out things she desires to know.

Violet enjoys her ability to enter the mind of creatures around her, from the cats in her home to the hawks that glide overhead. During one experience Violet is in the mind of a hawk as it hunts and the mind of the squirrel it catches, enjoying both the thrill of the hunter and the terror of the hunted at the same time. Violet gets sexual satisfaction from experiences such as this and because she can also share the mind of her sister the two share these experiences together.

Violet is killed by Candy when he discovers that Violet and Verbina have exhumed the body of their mother and had the pack of cats consume it so that their mother would always be part of the family. Candy's rage at his sister is what enables Bobby and Frank to overcome his strength and bring an end to the monster.



Verbina Pollard

Verbina is the second twin, always silent. Verbina had not overcome her autism, preferring to live through her sister and the feelings they share. Verbina is also able to join minds with the creatures that Violet can, and she seems to get sexual pleasure from the experiences as well. Verbina is also killed by Candy when he discovers that she and Violet exhumed their mother's body and had the pack of cats consume Roselle.

Clint Karaghiosis

An employee of Dakota and Dakota, Clint is the definition of the strong and silent type. An exemplary employee, Clint is dedicated to the Dakotas, and even more so to his wife, Felina. Clint handles the tasks dealt to him with no questions and stoic determination, always discreet and direct.

Clint handles the strange case of Frank Pollard with his usual calm, not reacting to the strange things that take place. The height of discretion, Clint only speaks of the cases he is working on to his wife. Felina is deaf, and communicates through sign language. The fact that she cannot speak might have something to do with Clint's willingness to share so much with her, speaking for both of them. Felina loves to hear stories about Clint's cases and to share in his life in such a way.

When time Clint brings home one of the red stones to show Felina he has a sense of dread as he sees the red light reflected through the stone onto Felina's face. Clint feels that something is going to happen to his wife and is unable to shake his fear. His darkest fears become real when Candy Pollard teleports into his home and kills his wife, drinking her blood in their kitchen. Clint is able to wound Candy, but Pollard escapes in an instant.

Clint's character displays itself when Candy returns in moments, hoping to find a devastated husband. Instead Clint is in the bedroom, lying next to his wife in bed. Clint shoots himself in the head, unable to live without his wife.

Hal

An employee of Dakota and Dakota, Hal is the first to witness Frank teleporting. While guarding Frank in the hospital, Hal sees Frank simply vanish with a small pop. Hal is amazed when Frank appears and disappears repeatedly, at one time ripping the rail of the bed off and taking it with him. Hal also hears a faint flute-like music as well.

Tom Rassmussen

A man hired to steal the Whizard computer program from Decondyne. Bobby and Julie Dakota are hired to catch him in the act.



Derek

Thomas' roommate at Cielo Vista, Derek also has Down's syndrome. Derek is not as intelligent as Thomas, but the two get along well. Thomas tries to warn Derek of the danger they might be facing, but Derek is unable to grasp the situation. Candy Pollard teleports into Thomas' room, killing Derek before help can arrive.

Roselle Pollard

The mother of the Frank Pollard and his siblings, Roselle is the product of incest, and born a hermaphrodite. With both male and female functioning organs, Roselle impregnates herself for each of her three pregnancies. The results are the "abilities" that her children are born with. Frank and Candy are able to teleport, Candy also has the ability to use force energy to affect things around him. Violet and Verbina have the ability to meld with the minds of creatures around them, using animals to see places that they normally could not, and experience the feelings and emotions of the animal kingdom.

Though the children are by-products of such an extremely odd conception, they all look normal, with the exception of Candy. Candy has four testacles but no penis. As a result of this Roselle singles him out as pure and miraculous and teaches him her version of the way the world works. Roselle teaches Candy to steal, as he can teleport easily to various locations and gather valuables and cash. In addition, Roselle teaches Candy that murder is acceptable, as long as the death benefits the family. Candy worships Roselle and is devastated when she is murdered by Frank who is simply trying to escape her madness.

Dr. Lawrence Fogarty

The doctor who attends the birth of Roselle Pollard as well as those of her children, Fogarty is an unkind man, with no care or concern for Frank Pollard or his siblings. The only interest Fogarty has in the family is the excitement of seeing what might be wrong with the children as they are conceived in such an abnormal matter and their genetics are twisted by incest and drug use. Fogarty declares that it is not his problem that Candy is a killer and that is just the way the world works.

Lee Chen

The computer expert at Dakota and Dakota

Jackie Jaxx

The hypnotist that works with Frank and causes the episode of teleportation for Frank and Bobby.



Objects/Places

Dakota and Dakota

The investigation agency that is owned and operated by Julie and Bobby Dakota.

Cielo Vista

The residential home where Julie Dakota's brother Thomas lives. Thomas shares a room with Derek, another man with Down's syndrome.

Decodyne

The computer company that hires Bobby and Julie to catch a program thief.

Palomar Laboratories

The lab that determines that Frank was covered in cat blood upon waking in his hotel room.

Santa Barbara

The area in California where the Pollard family lives.

Mount Fuji

One of the locations Frank teleports with Bobby while trying to escape Candy.

Panaluu, Hawaii

The location of the beach where Frank had gotten the black sand. Bobby also teleports there with Frank.

The Bad Place

The Bad Place is Thomas' vision of what death is—alone in the dark, and unable to ever see your loved ones again.



The Dream

Bobby and Julie Dakota's dream to sell the agency and retire in the near future, with Thomas by their side

Chanel No. 5

The perfume worn by Roselle Pollard and which Candy continues to use in her room so that he can remember her more vividly.



Themes

Rage

Rage, an intense form of anger, is prevalent in *The Bad Place*, by Dean Koontz. Candy Pollard, the monstrous son of Roselle Pollard, feels intense rage toward his brother Frank for the murder of their mother. Rage is not usually extinguished until the object of said rage is removed or the person feeling the rage is incapacitated in some way. It is Candy's goal to kill his brother, which he hopes will end the need he has to kill. Though Roselle has been dead seven years, Candy is still aware of her displeasure in his uncontrollable urges. Candy still lives to please his mother, and he feels that killing Frank will make her proud of him, even from beyond the grave.

Candy's rage is channeled into his search for Frank as the oldest of the Pollard children attempts to hide from Candy. While searching for Frank, Candy often comes into contact with people that Frank has had some kind of contact with. Though there is no explanation given as to how Frank has come to use the identification that he found in his bag, there is clear evidence that Candy tracked Frank using the names of the deceased that Frank has assumed. The brutal murders of the families leaves no doubt that Candy has visited his rage and destructive powers on them.

Candy's rage is also his downfall. When Candy is finally able to track Frank to Doc Fogarty's house, he has no qualms about killing Julie Dakota, but he refrains in order to get Frank to return to their childhood home. Once there, Frank's seemingly innocent question about the presence of Roselle causes Candy to turn on his sisters, Violet and Verbina. Candy promises his mother that he will care for the twins, and has done his best despite the fact that their lifestyle disgusts him. Candy kills his sisters, tearing out their throats, and in doing so breaks his promise to his mother. One wonders if this act is what gives Frank the ability to take Candy and teleport, merging the two men into one mass of tissue and bone. If Candy had not discovered his sisters' deed, it is possible that his continuing rage at Frank would have destroyed the older Pollard as well as Julie and Bobby Dakota.

Sacrifice

Sacrifice, the selfless act of one for the good of another, is central in *The Bad Place*, by Dean Koontz. Frank Pollard commits the ultimate sacrifice, ending his own life so that he can rid the world of the horror that is his brother, Candy. Ending Candy's life is indeed good for all of mankind, but Frank takes it upon himself to act in order to save Julie Dakota, one of the few people in his life to shown him compassion and understanding.

For his entire life, Frank has been different and alone, even within his own strange family. This feeling of loneliness has driven him for years while trying to stay one step



ahead of his brother Candy's plans for retribution. As Frank's life begins to unravel quickly and he loses more and more of himself, he connects with the Dakotas and their employees. The Dakotas are leery of Frank, but willingly put themselves in harm's way to try and help him. Frank pays them back with his life, realizing that while he will never be free, and will never break free of the horrible loneliness he has always felt, his life will not have been in vain.

On a smaller but no less meaningful level, Thomas, Julie's brother, sacrifices himself to Candy in order to keep his sister safe. Thomas does not have the communication skill necessary to warn Julie and Bobby of the danger they are in, but he tries, sending his thoughts to Bobby in a effort to keep his beloved sister safe. In the end, Candy kills Thomas, but the brave young man learns that he has nothing to fear in death. Sacrificing himself for his sister, Thomas sends the thoughts of peace to Bobby, hoping that his brother-in-law will let Julie know that he died without fear of what lies beyond life.

Ethics

The question of ethics arises in *The Bad Place* when Julie and Bobby Dakota meet Dr. Fogarty, the man who delivered Roselle Pollard and her four children. The Dakotas expect the kindly looking gentleman to be what he appears, an honest doctor who looks out for his patients. In reality, Fogarty is a self-indulgent man, intent on living a life of wealth, regardless of what goes on around him or what he has to do to achieve this.

Fogarty's ethics, or his sense right vs. wrong, are non-existent. Roselle Pollard was born to a teenage mother, the product of rape and incest. Her resulting medical condition as a hermaphrodite seems to be a direct result. Fogarty, as a doctor, should have reported the abuse, but instead he watched in interest, waiting to see what would become of the young girl. When he discovered that Roselle had the ability to impregnate herself, Fogarty was thrilled, waiting to see what type of monstrous children would be created with such a twisted genetic make-up.

Discovering that Fogarty not only knew of the 'talents' that the Pollard children possessed, but that he willingly participated in keeping Candy's horrible actions secret is too much for Julie and Bobby Dakota to comprehend. Fogarty's willing disregard for the lives that had been destroyed by the acts he had witnessed showed a complete lack of ethics. In any human ethics guide; preventing choices that can harm another. In Fogarty's case, as a doctor, he was not only turned away from the ethics that a normal human should possess, he had willingly turned away from the ethics that his profession thrived on.

Style

Point of View

The point of view in *The Bad Place* is third person. Reliable and omniscient, and from the point of view of several characters in the novel, the reader is able to experience the thoughts and feelings of each character. This is extremely helpful to the reader and the action and occurrences in the novel switch rapidly from character to character. It also gives one the ability to understand the reasoning behind the characters actions.

The novel is written with equal parts descriptive passages and dialogue between characters. This helps convey the quick pace at which events take place, as well as move the reader along with the sense of desperation that many of the characters feel. As there are so many characters that are central to the plot, this helps one differentiate between what each wishes to achieve and why. The descriptive passages give the reader a sense of what each character is experiencing, particularly when that feeling is something out of the norm, whether it be teleporting, or visiting another planet.

Setting

The Bad Place is set in California, with various locations within the state visited. Most of the novel takes place along the coastline. There are several other locations visited during episodes when Frank is teleporting with Bobby Dakota, including Japan, Hawaii, and in one instance another planet where engineered insects create red diamonds after ingesting the dirt of the planet and digesting it.

Though the different places visited are not described in much detail, it is more the amount of places visited that is important. The reader gets a sense of the life Frank has lead teleporting from place to place, running from his brother, trying to save himself. The frequency of the visits and the fact that Frank has seemingly no control over them signifies that it is not the place that is important, but the reason for the quick trip.

California plays an important part in the novel, not just as the central location, but also for what it represents. The Dream that Bobby and Julie have resonates with the larger California Dream, with which so many people over so many years migrated to the West coast in order to obtain their fondest wishes.

Language and Meaning

The language in *The Bad Place* is modern, as the novel is set in California in the time frame of the 1980s. The characters are expressive, and the writing allows the reader to get a sense of each character by the way they speak to each other, as well as the thoughts and feelings that each has.



The character of Thomas is written in a manner that allows the reader to see how his Down's syndrome affects the way he views the world and the people he interacts with. Thomas speaks clearly, but sometimes has difficulty finding the words to express himself clearly. This is not the case when he thinks however; his thoughts still reflect some confusion. For example, Thomas believes that his intelligence is reflected by his "eye cue," as opposed to his I.Q. Since the author uses this type of language when "thinking" for Thomas, the reader is able to get a better understanding of the difficulties that Thomas faces.

Structure

The Bad Place is broken down into 57 numbered chapters that vary in length from half a page to 15 pages. For the most part, each chapter describes a specific event or action taken by a particular character. On some occasions the longer chapters merge the activities of several characters, allowing the reader to get a sense of the urgency that takes place in each of their lives.

The plot of the novel centers around the life of Frank Pollard and his strange ability to teleport. Julie and Bobby Dakota cross paths with Pollard when he hires them to help him discover his identity and what happens when he sleeps. Through investigation, the Dakotas and their staff discover Frank's ability; however they also draw the attention of Frank's brother, Candy, who wishes to kill his brother and anyone Frank considers a friend. The novel takes place over several days, with events occurring at a faster pace as the climax approaches.

The novel is fast-paced, both because of the way it is written and because of the development of the narrative. The Bad Place is an enjoyable book to read, both entertaining, and thought provoking.



Quotes

"As his rapid breathing slowed and as his heartbeat decelerated, he abruptly realized that he did not know who he was. He knew his name—Frank Pollard—but that was all. He did not know how old he was, what he did for a living, where he had come from, where he was going, or why. He was so startled by his predicament that for a moment his breath caught in his throat; then his heartbeat soared again, and he let his breath out in a rush.

Fireflies in a windstorm....

What the hell did that mean?"

Chapter One, p. 10.

"What the hell am I tangled up in?" he said aloud. He needed to hear his own voice to convince himself that he was, in fact, not just a ghost reluctant to leave this world for the one to which death had entitled him.

As the fog closed around his parked car, blotting out most of the night beyond, a terrible loneliness overcame him. He could think of no one to whom he could turn, nowhere to which he could retreat and be assured safety. A man without a past was also a man without a future."

Chapter 9, p. 37.

"He took her in his arms, held her close, cheek to cheek, with his face buried in her hair. Her arms tightened around him.

They stood that way for a while, saying nothing, letting the residual fear evaporate in the gentle heat they generated between them. Fear and love were indivisible. If you allowed yourself to care, to love, you made yourself vulnerable, and vulnerability led to fear. He found meaning in life through his relationship with her, and if she died, meaning and purpose would die too."

Chapter 12, p. 46.

"Candy slept all day in the front bedroom that had once been his mother's, breathing in her special scent. Two or three times a week, he carefully shook a few drops of her favorite perfume—Chanel No. 5—onto a white, lace-trimmed handkerchief, which he kept on the dresser beside her silver comb-and-brush set, so each breath he took in the room reminded him of her. Occasionally he half woke from slumber to readjust the pillows or pull the covers more tightly around him, and the trace of perfume always lulled him as if it were a tranquilizer; each time he happily drifted back into his dreams."

Chapter 18, p. 74.

"It started just that morning. A funny feeling. Not funny ha-ha. Funny strange. Funny scary. Something real bad's going to happen to Julie, the feeling said. Thomas got so upset, he tried to warn her. He TVed a warning to her. They said the pictures and voices and music on the TV were sent through the air, which he first thought was a lie, that they were making fun of his being dumb, expecting him to believe anything, but Julie said it was true, so sometimes he tired to TV his thoughts to her, because if you could send pictures and music and voices through the air, thoughts ought to be easy. Be



careful, Julie, he TVed. Look out, be careful, something bad's going to happen."
Chapter 22, p. 88.

"God had given Candy a taste for blood, made him a predator, and therefore God was responsible for whatever Candy did; his mother had explained all of that long ago. God wanted him to be selective in his killing; but when Candy was unable to restrain himself, the ultimate blame was God's, for He had instilled the blood lust in Candy but had not provided him with the strength to control it.

Like that of all predators, Candy's mission was to thin the sick and the weak from the herd. In his case, morally degenerate members of the human herd were the intended prey: thieves, liars, cheats, adulterers. Unfortunately he did not always recognize sinners when he met them. Fulfilling his mission had been far easier when his mother had been alive, for she had no trouble spotting the blighted souls for him."
Chapter 24, p. 95.

"The Bad Thing was still out there. He could feel it. A man but not a man. Something more than a man. Very bad. Ugly-nasty. He'd felt it for days, but he hadn't TVed a warning to Bobby since last week because the Bad Thing wasn't coming any closer. It was far away, right now Julie was safe, and if he TVed too many warnings to Bobby, then Bobby would stop paying attention to them, and when the Bad Thing finally showed up, Bobby wouldn't believe in it any more, and then it would get Julie because Bobby wouldn't be paying attention.

What Thomas most feared was that the Bad Thing would take Julie to the Bad Place. Their mother went to the Bad Place when Thomas was two years old, so he'd never known her. Then their dad went to the Bad Place later, leaving Thomas with just Julie."
Chapter 27, p. 127.

"The draft and the flute had given way to stillness, silence.

"where did you go?" Hal asked, approaching the bed.

"Fireflies," Pollard said, apparently dazed. His hair was spiked and tangled, and his round face was pale.

"Fireflies?"

"Fireflies in a windstorm," Pollard said.

Then he vanished. One second he was sitting in bed, as real and solid as anyone Hal had ever known, and the next second he was gone as inexplicably and neatly as a ghost abandoning a haunt. A brief hiss, like air escaping from a punctured tire, accompanied his departure."

Chapter 36, pp. 167-168.

"Even exhausted, preoccupied with his own fears, and after only a one-day association with the Dakotas, Frank realized that Bobby was the more imaginative and mentally nimble of the two. Julie was probably smarter than her husband; but she was also a more methodical thinker than he was, far less likely than he was to make sudden leaps of logic to arrive at insightful deductions and imaginative solutions. Julie would more often be right than Bobby was, but on those occasions when the firm resolved a client's problems quickly, the resolution would usually be attributed to Bobby. They made a



good pair, and Frank was relying on their complementary natures to save him."
Chapter 39, p. 189.

"But this time would be different. He had never been as furious as he was at that moment, not even seven years ago when he had found his mother's bloody, sundered body and had learned the ax had been wielded by Frank. He was angrier now because the old rage had never subsided; it had fed on itself all these years, and on the humiliation of repeatedly failing to get his hands on Frank when the opportunities to do so arose. Now it was a midnight-black bile that coursed in his veins and bathed the muscles of his heart and nourished the cells of his brain where visions of vengeance were spawned in profusion."

Chapter 48, p. 271.

"James—or Candy, if you wish—was born with four testes instead of two, but with no male organ. Now, at birth, male infants all carry their testes safely in their abdominal cavity, and the testes descend later, during infant maturation. But Candy's never descended and never could, because there was no scrotum for them to descend into. And for another thing, there's a strange excrescence of bone that would prevent their descent. So they've remained within his abdominal cavity. But I would guess they've functioned well, busily producing quite large amounts of testosterone, which is related to development of musculature and partly explains his formidable size."

Chapter 55, p. 360.

"Bobby could never know if Frank had intended to evoke the bloody consequences that ensued from his next act, whether his words were calculated, or whether he was speaking out of befuddlement and was as surprised as anyone by the turmoil that followed. Whatever the case, he frowned at the cats, looked up at the bolder of the twins, and said, "Ah, is Mother still here, then? Is she still here in the house with us?"

Chapter 56, p. 375.

Topics for Discussion

Who is Frank Pollard and what is he running from?

What is the dream of Bobby and Julie Dakota? Do they achieve it? How?

How does Thomas become involved with the Frank Pollard case?

What is the reason behind the "abilities" that the Pollard family appear to have?

What is Thomas' gift? Would you consider Thomas smarter than some? Why?

How did Candy Pollard show his mother that he loved her?

Where do Bobby and Julie wind up? How? Have they achieved The Dream?